INTERVIEWER'S MANUAL FOR THE FEMALE CIRCUMCISION MODULE

WOMAN'S QUESTIONNAIRE

In this section we will collect data on knowledge and prevalence of and attitudes toward female genital cutting, also known as female circumcision (FGC). Not all women are comfortable talking about FGC. Further, in countries where the practice is not legal, or where there are social sanctions against it, women may be particularly reluctant to discuss the topic freely. Thus it is important to ask the questions in a neutral tone of voice, without being critical or judgmental. If the respondent appears reluctant to answer these questions, remind her that the same questions are being asked of women all over the country and that her answers are completely confidential and will not be shared with anyone.

QUESTIONS GC1 – GC3: KNOWLEDGE OF FEMALE CIRCUMCISION

Questions on FGC are to be asked from women who have heard about FGC. Hence GC1 and GC2 are very important because they help determine which women know about FGC. Women who know what female circumcision is, or have heard of it will answer YES to GC1. In this case, circle code 1 and skip to GC3. If women answer NO then circle code 2 and ask GC2. GC2 is needed because sometimes women may know what FGC is but know it by some other name. Thus GC2 explains to the respondent what FGC is. Remember to read the question exactly as it is written.

If the respondent answers YES, circle the appropriate code and continue with question GC3. If she says NO, skip the remaining questions on FGC and go directly to the following section.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, BEGINNING WITH GC3, ARE ONLY FOR WOMEN WHO KNOW ABOUT FEMALE CIRCUMCISION.

GC3 asks women who know about FGC whether they themselves have been circumcised. Again look for signs of hesitation. Remind the respondent about the confidentiality of her answers. If the woman says that she has not been circumcised, skip to GC9; otherwise, proceed to GC4.

QUESTIONS GC4-GC6: TYPE OF GENITAL CUTTING

There are various types of genital cutting that a woman can undergo. These types differ by areas, cultures and by the person who does it. In its most radical form, the clitoris and the labia minora are totally removed and the genital opening is sewn up. The less radical moderate form consists of removing only some of the skin from the genital area. The important issue here is to know which form of genital cutting the respondent has experienced. Accordingly, GC4 tries to determine whether flesh was removed from the genital area. If no flesh was removed (GC4 coded 2), GC5 asks if the genital area was only nicked (only a cut was made) without removing any flesh.

GC6 concerns all women who have been circumcised irrespective of how they answered GC4 and GC5. Its purpose is to provide additional information on the form of genital cutting that the woman has undergone; whether any flesh was removed from the genital area or not, we want to know if the genital area was sewn closed.

Note that on all three questions, it is possible for women to say that they do not know what was done to them even though they know they are circumcised. Hence a DON'T KNOW answer is possible but before accepting it, be sure that the respondent has understood the question.

QUESTION GC7: AGE AT FEMALE CIRCUMCISION

As in other places in the questionnaire, the answer to GC7 on age at circumcision must be recorded in completed years. Remember that a completed year in this context means her age on her last birthday before her circumcision.

Since the respondent may not be sure of her age at circumcision, try to help the respondent narrow down the period in which the circumcision could have occurred. Get the closest estimate by probing using life markers such as the start of school, the start of menstruation, or the time of marriage. You can also compare the respondent's circumcision to that of one of her sisters if she knows a much more exact approximation of the age of her sister at circumcision.

If the respondent says that the circumcision took place when she was just baby, then circle code 95. It is only in cases where the respondent is not able to provide you with the any information at all about her age at circumcision that you are allowed to circle code 98 for DON'T KNOW.

QUESTION GC8: THE PERSON WHO PERFORMED THE CIRCUMCISION

The goal of this question is to obtain information on the qualifications of the person who performed the circumcision. This information helps to increase understanding of the medical and social context within which the circumcision is being performed. Code only the answer provided by the respondent. The circumcision may have been performed in a traditional manner, by a traditional circumciser or a traditional midwife/birth attendant or other local traditional provider, OR by a health professional (doctor or nurse/midwife or other health professional). This is not a multiple response question—only one code should be circled.

QUESTION GC9: FILTER/DOES RESPONDENT HAVE A LIVING DAUGHTER?

Check questions 213, 215 and 216 in the birth history table to determine whether the respondent has one or more living daughters born in 1995 or later. If she has at least one living daughter born in 1995 or later, proceed to GC10; if not then skip to GC16.

QUESTIONS GC10-GC15: GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Questions GC11-GC14 collect information on all the respondent's daughters age 15 or less. The questions must be asked for only one daughter at a time, starting with the youngest daughter. However, before questions can be asked about daughters, you must first complete GC10. To do this, use information from questions 213, 215 and 216 of the respondent's birth history and fill out the birth history number and name of each living daughter born in 1995 or later at the head of each column. Start with the youngest daughter in the first column. In the case where a woman has more than three living daughters, take an additional copy of the questionnaire to complete the information for the fourth or fifth daughter.

Remember that you must go down each column for one daughter at a time. This means that you must fill out all the information for one daughter before starting with the next daughter. To ensure that the respondent knows which daughter you are talking about, be sure to insert the correct daughter's name when asking each question.

Once the information is filled for each daughter, GC15 provides instructions on what to do next. For example, if the woman has only one daughter, then once you have completed the first column, GC15 tells you to go to GC16. If the woman has two daughters, then GC15 in the first column tells you to go back to GC11 and ask the questions about the next daughter and fill out the second column. If the respondent has more than three daughters, GC15 instructs you to go to a new questionnaire and ask GC11 for the next daughter.

QUESTION GC11: WHETHER DAUGHTER IS CIRCUMCISED

Since all questions so far have been about the respondent's own experience with circumcision, it is important that you introduce this next set of questions to the respondent by reading clearly the introductory sentence in the box above GC10: **"Now I would like to ask you some questions about your (daughter/daughters)."** Remember to use 'daughter' if she has only one daughter below the age of 15 and 'daughters' only if she has more than one daughter in this age group.

GC11 asks whether the daughter being discussed has been circumcised. Ask the question mentioning the daughter by name. Then, go down the column to the next question for the same daughter according to the answer given. If the daughter has been circumcised, ask GC12; if she has not been circumcised, go to GC11 in the next column. If no more daughters, go to GC16.

QUESTION GC12: AGE OF DAUGHTER AT THE TIME OF HER CIRCUMCISION

This question concerns the age of the daughter at the time of her circumcision. Record the age in completed years. Again, as in GC7, if the mother does not know the age, probe by asking additional questions to get an approximate age. If the mother still says that she does not know, circle code 98 for DON'T KNOW.

QUESTION GC13-GC14: TYPE OF CIRCUMCISION AND PERSON PERFORMING THE CIRCUMCISION

These questions are similar to GC6 and GC7 and are concerned with the type of circumcision undergone by the daughter and who the circumciser for the daughter was. Fill each out as per the instructions for GC6 and GC7, respectively.

QUESTION GC16: RELIGION AND FEMALE CIRCUMCISION

All women who have heard of FGC receive this question. The goal of this question is to ascertain whether the respondent believes that the practice of female genital cutting is required by her religion. It does not matter what her religion is or whether it is in reality required by the religion or not. We are only interested in the respondent's own opinion on this question.

QUESTION GC17: CONTINUATION OF THE PRACTICE OF FEMALE CIRCUMCISION

Like GC16, this question is also trying to get the respondent's opinion—do not in any way indicate whether you do or do not agree with the respondent's opinion. This question is not saying anything about ways in which the practice should be stopped, or whether it is possible for it to be stopped. We only want to know if the respondent thinks that the practice should be stopped or not.

MAN'S QUESTIONNAIRE

In this section we will collect data on the knowledge and attitudes toward female genital cutting, also known as female circumcision (FGC). Not all men are comfortable talking about FGC. Further, in countries where the practice is not legal, or where there are social sanctions against it, men may be particularly reluctant to discuss the topic freely. Thus it is important to ask the questions in a neutral tone of voice, without being critical or judgmental. If the respondent appears reluctant to answer these questions, remind him that the same questions are being asked of men all over the country and that all his answers are completely confidential and will not be shared with anyone.

QUESTIONS GC1 - GC3: KNOWLEDGE OF FEMALE CIRCUMCISION

Questions on FGC are to be asked from men who have heard about FGC. Hence GC1 and GC2 are very important because they will help to determine which men know about FGC. If men know what female circumcision is or have heard of it, they will answer YES to GC1. In this case, circle code 1 and skip to GC3. If they answer NO then circle code 2 and ask GC2. GC2 is needed because some men may know what FGC is but know it by some other name. Thus GC2 explains to the respondent what we mean by FGC. Be sure to read the question exactly as it is written.

If the respondent answers YES, circle the appropriate code and then continue with GC3. If he says NO to GC2, skip the rest of the questions on FGC and go directly to the following section.

QUESTION GC3: RELIGION AND FEMALE CIRCUMCISION

The goal of this question is to ascertain whether the practice of female genital cutting is required by his religion. It does not matter what his religion is. We only want to know his opinion. Only one answer is possible here. Listen to the man's answer and circle the code corresponding to it.

QUESTION GC4: OPINION OF MEN ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE PRACTICE OF FEMALE CIRCUMCISION

Like GC3, this question is also trying to get the respondent's opinion—do not in any way indicate whether you do or do not agree with the respondent's opinion. This question is not saying anything about ways in which the practice should be stopped, or whether it is possible for it to be stopped. We only want to know if the respondent thinks that the practice should be stopped or not.